

**State of Alaska
FY2004 Governor's Operating Budget**

**Department of Labor and Workforce Development
Special Projects
Component Budget Summary**

Component: Special Projects

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Component Mission

To seek out new and innovative programs which will enhance and support the general mission of the division to provide services to individuals with disabilities.

Component Services Provided

The division seeks funding (primarily federal) for innovative projects that address client needs identified in the planning process. Projects are also designed to address state and federal initiatives. Projects are complementary to the basic vocational rehabilitation service program.

SUPPORTED EMPLOYMENT/TITLE VI PART C: Supported employment services is a 100% federally funded program to provide services to individuals with the most severe disabilities who require supported employment to enter or retain competitive employment. With the support and service provided through this program, the individuals are able to benefit from vocational rehabilitation services. Services funded include intensive on-the-job training services, follow-up services, and discrete post-employment services. Extended support services after placement and training must be provided by other sources of funding or with the use of natural supports.

INTERPRETER REFERRAL SERVICES: Grants are provided to non-profit organizations in Juneau, Anchorage and Fairbanks enabling them to administer the referral of sign language interpreters for deaf and hearing impaired individuals.

ALASKA WORKS PROJECT: The Alaska Works Project will assist individuals with disabilities to make use of federal and state provisions allowing the retention of Medicaid and Medicare benefits when they return to work. This project will also engage business executives in developing aggressive strategies to increase the presence of people with disabilities in their workforce. Alaska Works started in November, 1999. It is funded 100% through an RSA with the Department of Health & Social Services for five years.

MICRO ENTERPRISE PROJECT: The Micro Enterprise Project is conducted in collaboration with the Governor's Council of Disabilities and Special Education and the Mental Health Trust Authority. The project will assist with the start-up of businesses of individuals who are Mental Health Trust beneficiaries and who are receiving services from the division under an approved Individual Plan for Employment. It is funded by an RSA with the Department of Health & Social Services.

ALASKA WORK INCENTIVE PROJECT: This project seeks to enhance the employability, employment and career advancement of people with disabilities through specialized services in the One-Stop delivery system established under the Workforce Investment Act of 1988.

CUSTOMIZED EMPLOYMENT PROJECT: The Alaska Workforce Investment Board, in partnership with the Alaska Workforce Investment Office, and the division will build the capacity of statewide One-Stop Job Centers to effectively serve people with severe disabilities through a customized employment approach. The project will provide for an individualized employment relationship based on the strengths, needs, and interest of the person with a disability, and will be designed to meet the needs of the employer.

Component Goals and Strategies

1) PROVIDE A MEANS FOR PEOPLE WHO ARE DEAF TO COMMUNICATE WITH HEARING PEOPLE.

* The division will fund three regional grants in Anchorage, Fairbanks and Juneau for sign language interpreter services. The grantees serve as referral agents to match interpreters with individuals who are deaf or hard of hearing and who need interpreter services for a specific purpose such as a meeting, medical appointment, job interview, etc.

2) ENABLE INDIVIDUALS WITH DISABILITIES TO GO TO WORK.

* The Alaska Works project is intended to initiate system change that addresses the barriers that keep people with disabilities from working: fragmented systems, lack of comprehensive vocational services, limited work opportunities, fear of losing benefits, financial disincentives and general lack of knowledge or use of existing work incentives. The primary customers are people with disabilities and employers.

* The Alaska Work Incentive Project will expand on the Alaska Works program by improving the capacity of One-Stop Centers to effectively and efficiently serve people with disabilities. Critical services such as benefits counseling and information on the services available and how to access services at One-Stop sites will be provided to people with disabilities.

* The Customized Employment project will form a strategic planning team with representation from One-Stop partner agencies, State and Local Workforce Investment Boards, community agencies, schools, businesses and financial institutions, and people with disabilities to promote full integration of Alaskans with disabilities into all aspects of the workforce development system.

Key Component Issues for FY2003 – 2004

The Alaska Works Project in conjunction with the Alaska Work Incentive Project will address the barriers individuals with disabilities face when they go to work. Many other disincentives exist which the projects will try to resolve for these individuals, such as addressing the challenge of finding their Medicaid and Medicare benefits cut off when their employers do not provide health insurance. Additionally, the projects work with business executives to develop strategies that will increase the presence of individuals with disabilities in their workforce.

The Alaska Works Project and the Alaska Work Incentive Project staff will focus efforts on the effective implementation of the Ticket to Work Incentive Improvement Act Legislation. This legislation is issued by the Social Security Administration and is scheduled to "roll-out" in Alaska in November 2002.

The Alaska Customized Employment Project will address the concern consumer focus groups have revealed that Alaskans with disabilities see many shortcomings in the workforce development system. Many consumers display confusion and misinformation about the Alaska Job Center Network.

Major Component Accomplishments in 2002

The Alaska Works project completed the following goals during the year:

* Staff participated in the coordination of Alaska's "Disability Mentoring Day". Over twenty transition age students with disabilities around the state participated in the day of mentoring with a community business person. Students met with a business person in a career field of interest to them and experienced first hand part of a day in that career field.

* The division coordinated a large strategic planning session around the Ticket to Work / Work Incentive Improvement Act. State agencies, One-Stop Job Center partners, community non-profits and businesses were represented at this event to prepare for Alaska's roll-out of Social Security Tickets to Work. A representative from Maximums, the Program Manager of the Ticket to Work, was in attendance and presented an overview of the legislation.

* The division supported the "Alaska Consumer Leadership Group". This group of self-identified community leaders with disabilities were offered and participated in training around effective community advocacy and leadership skills. With support from Alaska Works, the group meets regularly and has established goals around disability advocacy issues they plan to address.

* The division initiated the establishment of an Alaska chapter of the Business Leadership Network. This nationwide effort brings together businesses to support and lead each other on topics and issues around the employment of people with disabilities. The business community was also exposed to disability awareness, etiquette, and points of interest at several industry specific trade shows.

* In One-Stop Job Centers around the state, Alaska Works staff have worked with Job Center leaders to address accessibility issues and provide training on disability specific topics. Additionally, staff worked with Job Center staff to

plan for and execute numerous community job fairs. Project staff assured that these job fairs are accessible to people with disabilities and that marketing efforts about the fairs reach people with disabilities.

Two Resource Specialists were hired to join the Program Coordinator in implementing the Alaska Works Incentive Grant. The following goals were completed:

* The statewide Job Center Assistive Technology assessment was completed through a grant with the Assistive Technology Library of Alaska.

* Coordination of in-depth training and communication procedures were developed and implemented, which encompass partners from Alaska Works, Social Security and the Medicaid Infrastructure grant.

* The Rural Economic Development Project was established with the (Bethel) Association of Village Council Presidents, a Tribal Vocational Rehabilitation Program. The Program completed the grant application process for implementation of the project that will bolster the local economy through grants to local businesses. The businesses that receive grants to expand their business will commit to employing a staff person with a disability for a period of five years.

Statutory and Regulatory Authority

PL 102-569, Title IV

AS 23.15, Article 1

8 AAC 98

34 CFR

The Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA)

Special Projects
Component Financial Summary

All dollars in thousands

| | FY2002 Actuals | FY2003 Authorized | FY2004 Governor |
|--------------------------------|----------------|-------------------|-----------------|
| Non-Formula Program: | | | |
| Component Expenditures: | | | |
| 71000 Personal Services | 170.6 | 231.3 | 237.3 |
| 72000 Travel | 17.1 | 68.7 | 68.7 |
| 73000 Contractual | 76.6 | 367.0 | 467.4 |
| 74000 Supplies | 23.0 | 72.7 | 42.7 |
| 75000 Equipment | 0.0 | 0.0 | 0.0 |
| 76000 Land/Buildings | 0.0 | 0.0 | 0.0 |
| 77000 Grants, Claims | 423.3 | 1,026.8 | 952.6 |
| 78000 Miscellaneous | 0.0 | 0.0 | 0.0 |
| Expenditure Totals | 710.6 | 1,766.5 | 1,768.7 |
| Funding Sources: | | | |
| 1002 Federal Receipts | 523.2 | 1,526.6 | 1,528.8 |
| 1004 General Fund Receipts | 80.7 | 85.8 | 85.8 |
| 1007 Inter-Agency Receipts | 106.7 | 154.1 | 154.1 |
| Funding Totals | 710.6 | 1,766.5 | 1,768.7 |

Special Projects

Proposed Changes in Levels of Service for FY2004

Through the Customized Employment grant, the division anticipates more efficient services will be delivered by partner agencies in the Alaska Job Centers to better serve people with disabilities to become employed.

Summary of Component Budget Changes

From FY2003 Authorized to FY2004 Governor

All dollars in thousands

| | <u>General Funds</u> | <u>Federal Funds</u> | <u>Other Funds</u> | <u>Total Funds</u> |
|---|----------------------|----------------------|--------------------|--------------------|
| FY2003 Authorized | 85.8 | 1,526.6 | 154.1 | 1,766.5 |
| Adjustments which will continue current level of service: | | | | |
| -Annualize FY2003 COLA Increase for General Government and Supervisory Bargaining Units | 0.0 | 1.3 | 0.0 | 1.3 |
| -\$75 per Month Health Insurance Increase for Non-Covered Staff | 0.0 | 0.9 | 0.0 | 0.9 |
| FY2004 Governor | 85.8 | 1,528.8 | 154.1 | 1,768.7 |

Special Projects

Personal Services Information

| | Authorized Positions | | Personal Services Costs | |
|---------------|------------------------------------|----------------------------------|----------------------------------|----------------|
| | <u>FY2003</u> <u>Authorized</u> | <u>FY2004</u> <u>Governor</u> | | |
| Full-time | 4 | 4 | Annual Salaries | 179,318 |
| Part-time | 0 | 0 | Premium Pay | 0 |
| Nonpermanent | 0 | 0 | Annual Benefits | 65,146 |
| | | | <i>Less 2.93% Vacancy Factor</i> | (7,165) |
| | | | Lump Sum Premium Pay | 0 |
| Totals | 4 | 4 | Total Personal Services | 237,299 |

Position Classification Summary

| Job Class Title | Anchorage | Fairbanks | Juneau | Others | Total |
|-------------------|-----------|-----------|----------|----------|----------|
| Prog Coordinator | 1 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 1 |
| Project Assistant | 1 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 1 |
| Project Asst | 0 | 0 | 0 | 2 | 2 |
| Totals | 2 | 0 | 0 | 2 | 4 |